

University of Larbi Ben Mhidi – OEB

Department of Finance and Accounting

Level Grade: Master One – Two

Module: English as a Foreign Language

Business correspondence letters:

Quick tips:

Business letters should:

- Use formal language and avoid contractions like: don't, I'm // do not, I am
- Use polite, respectful and professional tone even if you are writing back a complaint letter
- Be sure not to use slang or conversational language
- Make sure that you implement strong vocabulary as well as you use appropriate tone for the purpose, audience or reader so that you sound more confident, competent and more professional
- Be as clear and concise as possible and double check errors in grammar and spelling

Essential inner qualities of a good correspondence letter:

The inner qualities of a correspondence letter refer to the way the content has been presented. This may include the language that has been utilised, the way details in the letter's body were arranged, and the general tone that was used in writing.

1. **Simplicity:** a good correspondence letter is never verbose. Instead, it uses a simple and easy language that every common man can comprehend. Difficult words and jargon are highly discouraged in this type of correspondence because the writer can't expect the letter's recipient to refer to the dictionary for every complex word used. Flowery words, metaphors, exaggeration, and anything that may alter the facts of the letter in any way must be avoided.

2. **Clarity:** one of the most important qualities that a correspondence letter must contain is clarity. This refers to the letter's general ability to be immediately and easily comprehensible to its audience.
The letter will be deemed unsuccessful in serving its purpose if its recipient does not fully understand its content. Ambiguity is a major taboo in correspondence letters. There should be a full disclosure of details that the audience can understand, and even respond to in the future.
3. **Accuracy:** refers to the letter's ability to lack errors in language, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
4. **Completeness:** a letter will only be considered complete if it has successfully provided all of the necessary information to its recipients.
5. **Relevance:** the letter should only contain information that is relevant to the present arrangement. Correspondence letters are known for their bluntness. They don't sway from the main matter at hand and never talk about issues that may not be crucial for the present undertaking.
6. **Neatness:** everybody appreciated a letter that is pleasing to look at, so make sure that your letter has the same quality. Correspondence letters must never be handwritten, which means that neatness is easier to achieve because your letter will be computer generated. Avoid overwriting and unnecessary elements in the physical appearance.

How to write a business letter:

A business letter has six main parts

1. **The sender's address:** the sender's address is included at the top of the letter, one line above the date. Do not write the sender's name. only include the street address, city, and zip code
2. **The date:** is included to identify when the letter was written. If the letter was written over several days, use the date when it was finished.
3. **The inside address:** it should include the name of the person you are sending the letter to, the name of the business, and the complete address. The inside address begins one line below the date.

4. **The salutation:** it is the greeting such as Dear Principal Matthews. The name and the title should match the inside address. Also, the salutation should be followed by a colon
5. **The body:** in the first paragraph, introduce yourself and state why you are writing. The next paragraph should expand on why you are writing with background information and important details. The last paragraph, should restate the purpose of the letter. You can also thank the person to whom you are writing and offer to answer any related questions.
6. **The closing:** it begins with one line after the body paragraph. Capitalise the first letter of the closing, and follow it with a comma. Don't forget to leave space for the signature (four lines between the closing and the sender's printed name).

1) Email correspondence:

xxxx@xxxxxxx.com

Dear Ms. Jones:

.....
I just wanted to send a quick note to thank you for yesterday's interview. The position we discussed is exactly what I have been looking for, and I feel that I will be able to make a positive contribution to your organisation. I appreciate the opportunity to be considered for employment at XYZ Corporation. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further information.

Sincerely,
John Doe

2) Business Memo:

- To: recipient's name and job title (Miranda Lawson? Director of Marketing. If you are addressing a designated group simply state (Accounting Department)
- From: your name and title
- Date: June 16, 2022
- Subject: make the subject clear and descriptive

Most business memos skip the greeting and immediately go into the body text.

Generally, memos don't include farewell (Sincerely, Tony), but it may be appropriate depending on your message and company's style.

Examples:

To: loading Dock Staff

From: Philip Yuen, Director of Shipping

Date: June 30, 2017

So I've got news for you all. We've had a tough year, as you know, but we've been recovering slowly but surely. But, of course, something had to mess up. Because Hank shipped three pallets to the wrong customer last week, the Board has decided to update the shipping procedure for the entire loading dock.

This is just something we'll have to get used to, even if it wastes all of our time in the process. Whenever we get an order ready to go, everyone on the loading dock will need to confirm shipments with me first. Only after I sign off on the details will anything be allowed on the shipping truck. This new change better prevent more careless errors.

The example above is poorly written and it is not acceptable. The body is unclear and rambling. There isn't a subject line and the main point of each paragraph is difficult to find. The message itself is also incredibly unprofessional, especially since it calls out a single person in a negative way.

To: Loading Dock Staff
From: Philip Yuen, Director of Shipping
Date: June 30, 2017
Subject: Update to Shipping Procedures

Due to some recent shipping issues, the Board has decided to update part of our shipping procedure. Whenever an order is ready to ship, please leave that order's shipping form in my office mailbox, and I will return it to your station once I confirm everything is correct. Although this change will slow down our process a little, it will hopefully prevent further errors.

If you have any questions, please feel welcome to stop by my office. Thank you all for everything you do. Your hard work is appreciated.

This is much better. The body is concise and clear, and the main point is the first sentence in each paragraph. There is also a strong subject line, and the message stays professional despite sharing negative news.